R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 014 508 UD 004 008

RURAL-URBAN DIFFERENCES IN REPORTED ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR.

BY- GLENN, NORVAL D. ALSTON, JON P.
YESHIVA UNIV., NEW YORK, N.Y., GRAD. SCH. OF EDUC.

PUB DATE MAR 67

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$0.88 20P.

DESCRIPTORS- *RURAL URBAN DIFFERENCES, PUBLIC OPINION, *ATTITUDES, *COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS, SURVEYS, FARMERS, *SOCIAL VALUES, WHITE COLLAR OCCUPATIONS, BLUE COLLAR OCCUPATIONS, PROFESSIONAL OCCUPATIONS

TO EXAMINE A NUMBER OF STEREOTYPES AND IMPRESSIONS HELD BY SOCIAL SCIENTISTS ABOUT DIFFERENCES IN RURAL-URBAN ATTITUDES, THIS RESEARCH ANALYZED THE RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS FROM 20 NATIONAL OPINION POLLS CONDUCTED BY THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION AND THE NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER FROM 1953 TO 1965. COMPARISONS WERE MADE BETWEEN THE RESPONSES OF FARMERS AND ADULT MEMBERS OF FARMERS' HOUSEHOLDS, AND FOUR LEVELS OF NONAGRICULTURAL WORKERS AND ADULT MEMBERS OF NONAGRICULTURAL HOUSEHOLDS--UPPER AND LOWER NONMANUAL AND UPPER AND LOWER MANUAL. THE FINDINGS GENERALLY SUPPORTED THE POPULAR STEREOTYPES, AND INDICATED THAT IN CONTRAST WITH MOST URBAN WORKERS, FARMERS ARE MORE TRADITIONAL IN RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND MORE ASCETIC, WORK-ORIENTED, PURITANICAL, PREJUDICED, ETHNOCENTRIC, ISOLATIONIST, UNINFORMED, UNLIKELY TO READ BOOKS OR NEWSPAPERS, DISTRUSTFUL OF PEOPLE, INTOLERANT OF DEVIANCE, OPPOSED TO CIVIL LIBERTIES AND BIRTH CONTROL, AND FAVORABLE TO EARLY MARRIAGE AND HIGH FERTILITY. HOWEVER FARMERS' POLITICAL ATTITUDES AND INTERESTS RANKED BETWEEN URBAN MANUAL AND NONMANUAL WORKERS IN AUTHORITARIANISM. FARMERS' RESPONSES GENERALLY WERE MORE SIMILAR TO THE RESPONSES OF MANUAL WORKERS THAN TO THOSE OF NONMANUAL OR WHITE-COLLAR WORKERS. SOME OF THESE RURAL-URBAN DIFFERENCES MIGHT BE EITHER A REFLECTION OF PERVASIVE PROTESTANT INFLUENCE IN RURAL AREAS OR A RESULT OF THE SIZE, DENSITY, OR COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION. AVAILABLE IN THE SOUTHWESTERN SOCIAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY, 1967, P. 381-400. (JL)

ED014508

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[*From* THE SOUTHWESTERN SOCIAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY, *March, 1967*]

Rural-Urban Differences in Reported Attitudes and Behavior*

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NORVAL D. GLENN
and
JON P. ALSTON
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

ALTHOUGH demographic differences between the rural and urban populations in the United States are well documented, the literature on rural-urban attitudinal differences still consists more of impressions and speculation than of reliable data.[1] Many authors who contrast rural and urban ways of life still rely heavily on Louis Wirth's classic essay published in 1938—an indication that in some respects our knowledge of rural-urban differences has progressed little beyond Wirth's astute observations.[2] Other authors believe that traditional differences between the rural and urban ways of life have largely disappeared, that the mass media, improved means of transportation, consolidated schools, and commercial agriculture have diffused urbanism, somewhat unevenly, to hamlets and the open countryside.[3] The stereotypical "hayseed," it is maintained, is largely historical, although

* We are indebted to the Roper Public Opinion Research Center, the Gallup Organization, and the National Opinion Research Center for permission to use the data presented here; to The University of Texas Research Institute for financial support; to Letitia Alston and Harriet Lesikar for assistance with the data analysis; and to Gideon Sjoberg for critical reading of the manuscript. Some of the data come from an earlier project financed by the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health at The University of Texas.

[1] To illustrate, a section on rural-urban attitudinal differences in a leading urban sociology textbook refers to only two studies and is less than three pages long. See Noel P. Gist and Sylvia F. Fava, *Urban Society* (5th ed.; New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1964), pp. 443–446.

[2] Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLIV (1938), 1–24.

[3] For instance, Kenneth Boulding writes that there is occurring "a disappearance of rural life as a distinctive and peculiar subculture within the society . . ." See his "The Death of the City: A Frightened Look at Post-civilization," in Oscar Handlin and John Burchard (eds.), *The Historian and the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press and Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 143.

UD 004008

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he may still be found occasionally in unusually isolated rural areas. According to this view, most farmers are no longer clearly distinguishable in life styles or in outlook from other segments of the American middle class.

The diverse observations and speculations are not totally inconsistent, and, relative to many sociological issues, have led to little controversy. The lack of more heated debate perhaps accounts for the fact that there has been relatively little effort to amass the empirical evidence needed for a coherent, comprehensive, and accurate description of rural-urban differences in attitudes and behavior. No one has synthesized the findings of the many studies that have made some kind of rural-urban comparison, and most of the data collected by national opinion polls have been reported only in press releases or not at all.[4] Yet, more reliable and complete evidence is clearly needed, both for immediately practical reasons and for building and testing sociological theory. For instance, those who would anticipate the effects of legislative reapportionment within the states can do so more successfully if they have a more vivid picture of rural-urban differences in values than is provided by past voting patterns. And theorists in urban sociology still need data to cast light on the effects of high population size, density, and heterogeneity on culture, personality, and social structure. Obviously, historical and comparative materials are essential to discovering these effects, but the value of any comparison is limited if it includes inaccurate impressions of recent and contemporary American society.

In this paper we draw on the enormous body of public opinion poll data to contribute to knowledge on American rural-urban differences. In the space allotted we can report only a small portion of the available data, and we have selected those that seem the most interesting and significant. The data relate to a number of theoretically relevant questions, but we are concerned primarily with the following:

1. How closely do popular stereotypes and the impressions of sociologists correspond with the reality of rural and urban thought and behavior? The different stereotypes and impressions are sometimes contradictory, but generally rural people are considered to be relatively conservative, religious, puritanical, ascetic, ethnocentric, isolationist, intolerant of heterodox ideas and values, prejudiced, uninformed, authoritarian, and family-centered. The popular and academic impressions differ little on these points.

2. To what extent are farmers "middle-class" in their attitudes and behavior and to what extent do they resemble the urban working class? In

[4] The only sociological article reporting a variety of poll data on rural-urban differences is becoming somewhat dated. See Howard W. Beers, "Rural-Urban Differences: Some Evidence from Public Opinion Polls," *Rural Sociology,* XVIII (1953), 1–11. The polls surveyed by Beers were conducted between 1946 and 1950.

spite of the low average rank of farmers on socioeconomic variables, sociologists tend to consider them "middle-class," largely because they are self-employed and a large percentage of them own land and equipment.[5] Certainly, by a Marxian or similar definition of social class, farmers and urban workers are not in the same class. However, in contemporary American sociology there is a tendency to define classes in terms of culture and life styles, and there is reason to question the common assumption that farmers are culturally "middle-class." Indeed, some of the popular stereotypes and sociological impressions suggest otherwise. Answering this question, of course, requires an empirical determination of white-collar and working-class characteristics as well as of rural-urban differences.

3. Are there any rural-urban differences in attitudes and behavior that reflect inherent differences in rural and urban social structure and ways of life, or can the attitudinal differences be explained by variations in socioeconomic status, age, regional distribution, religious composition, and economic interests? Rural people in the United States are on the average poorer, less well-educated, older, more highly concentrated in the South, and more predominantly Protestant than their urban countrymen (see Table 2), and these differences alone should produce considerable differences in attitudes and behavior. If rural-urban attitudinal differences should remain when earnings, education, age, region, and religion are held constant, and if there is no reason to believe that they result from economic interests, they may reflect differences in social structure and interaction that in turn result from differences in the size, density, and heterogeneity of the population. If, on the other hand, the control variables should account for rural-urban differences, no influence of population size, density, and heterogeneity would be indicated. This finding would indicate that rural-urban differences, as such, are of little theoretical importance.

Methods

To cast light on these questions, we compare the responses of farmers and adult members of households headed by farmers with the responses of nonagricultural workers and adult members of households headed by nonagricultural workers. The nonagricultural workers are divided into four broad levels: (1) *upper nonmanual*, consisting of professional and semi-professional workers, businessmen, and executives; (2) *lower nonmanual*, consisting of clerical and sales workers; (3) *upper manual*, consisting of

[5] For instance, Mayer writes that "The vast majority of American Farmers may be considered as small business enterprisers and members of the lower middle class." See Kurt B. Mayer, *Class and Society* (New York: Random House, 1955), p. 42.

craftsmen and foremen; and (4) *lower manual,* consisting of operatives, service workers, and nonfarm laborers. The very few farm laborers included in national survey samples are excluded from the analysis.

We analyze the responses to 92 questions from 20 national polls conducted by the Gallup Organization and the National Opinion Research Center from 1953 to 1965. The basic data are reported in Table 1.[6] Then we interpret these data in view of the data on earnings, education, age, and region of residence reported in Table 2. Since farmers differ considerably from all urban categories in median age and percentage residing in the South, we selected five polls containing diverse questions with diverse response patterns and tabulated data for non-Southern respondents aged 21 through 44. On the religious questions the data are restricted to Protestants. These data are given in italics in Table 1 immediately below the data for the total samples.

In general, we report and discuss the data as though we were taking the responses at their face value. We are aware, however, that there is often a discrepancy between true attitudes and behavior and the responses to poll questions. Unless we have reason to suspect its direction or to suspect that it is greater among either the rural or the urban respondents, we do not mention this discrepancy. Differences in reported attitudes and behavior are important, we believe, even if many of the responses are not honest. Response differences are themselves differences in behavior, and they reflect differences in other attitudes if not in the ones ostensibly tapped by the questions.

Findings

The correctness of the stereotypes and impressions.

The data in Table 1 indicate that the popular sterotypes and the impressions of social scientists are surprisingly accurate, even though some need qualification. If we accept the responses at their face value, the farmers are unambiguously less informed, more prejudiced, less favorable to civil liberties, less tolerant of deviance, more ethnocentric and isolationist, more work-oriented and ascetic, more puritanical, less favorable to birth control,

[6] All the samples excepting the 1953 NORC sample are probability samples, and all the differences in the probability samples of 12 or more percentage points are statistically significant at the .05 level or approach significance. If the percentages are much higher or lower than 50, differences of eight to ten points are usually significant. When several questions from different polls deal with the same or similar variables, consistency of the direction of the difference is evidence that it probably does not result from sampling error. We cannot claim that the data we present are representative of all the available data. However, we selected the questions without having knowledge of their response distributions in order to lessen the possible biasing effects of our preconceptions about the extent and nature of rural-urban differences.

TABLE 1

	Upper non-manual[a]	Lower non-manual[b]	Upper manual[c]	Lower manual[d]	Farmers[e]
Religious Beliefs, Practices, and Affiliations					
Attended church in last seven days (Gallup, 1965):	51.6	40.8	42.8	39.7	45.2
Are members of a church or synagogue (Gallup, 1954):	80.5	80.1	77.9	72.5	68.7
Are members of the Roman Catholic Church (Gallup, 1954):	17.4	17.7	26.6	19.1	4.5
Are members of the Baptist Church (Gallup, 1954):	10.8	9.2	13.3	18.7	17.9
Are members of the Presbyterian or Episcopal Church (Gallup, 1954):	10.2	9.9	4.5	3.6	5.4
Regularly watch or listen to religious services on television or radio (Gallup, 1957):	24.0	30.8	32.3	38.5	43.9
Young non-Southern Protestants:[f]	*25.3*	*23.4*	*28.6*	*33.0*	*34.1*
Believe that Jesus Christ was the Son of God (Christians only, Gallup, 1957):	79.1	89.2	91.6	93.6	94.9
Young non-Southern Protestants:	*86.7*	*83.0*	*95.2*	*95.4*	*88.6*
Believe that there is a Devil (Gallup, 1957):	47.3	55.2	61.0	68.3	76.8
Young non-Southern Protestants:	*44.4*	*44.7*	*61.9*	*62.0*	*69.8*
Believe that there is life after death (Gallup, 1957):	69.4	73.5	71.6	78.3	82.6
Young non-Southern Protestants:	*70.3*	*68.1*	*84.5*	*72.5*	*72.7*
Believe that Jesus Christ will return to earth (Christians only, Gallup, 1959):	43.6	52.3	57.9	60.1	72.9

[a] Professional and semi professional workers, businessmen, and executives.
[b] Clerical and sales workers.
[c] Craftsmen and foremen.
[d] Operatives, service workers, and nonfarm laborers.
[e] Farm owners, tenants, and managers. According to the 1960 census, only about 1 per cent of "farmers and farm managers" are managers.
[f] Aged 21 through 44.

TABLE 1—(Continued)

	Upper non-manual[a]	Lower non-manual[b]	Upper manual[c]	Lower manual[d]	Farmers[e]
Think that a person can be a Christian if he doesn't go to church (Christians only, Gallup, 1957):	85.3	81.5	81.1	75.4	72.7
Young non-Southern Protestants:	*92.3*	*87.2*	*94.0*	*80.7*	*79.5*
Think that a person can be a Christian if he doesn't believe that every word of the New Testament is true (Christians only, Gallup, 1957):	78.2	77.3	67.9	58.7	59.0
Young non-Southern Protestants:	*85.6*	*89.4*	*67.9*	*62.0*	*72.7*
Use of Alcohol and Tobacco					
Drink alcoholic beverages (Gallup, 1959):	71.2	72.9	60.7	63.9	33.5
Young non-Southern Protestants:	*81.7*	*82.8*	*72.6*	*74.1*	*69.4*
Object to women drinking in public places (Gallup, 1957):	39.8	33.9	46.5	49.6	68.5
Young non-Southern respondents:	*30.2*	*15.9*	*34.9*	*37.9*	*55.8*
Approve of liquor being sold at officers' and enlisted men's clubs on military posts (Gallup, 1953):	51.3	55.8	44.0	41.6	32.2
Favor nationwide prohibition (Gallup, 1959):	15.3	12.9	22.3	26.8	52.6
Young non-Southern respondents:	*7.6*	*4.6*	*12.8*	*17.5*	*38.9*
Have ever smoked cigarettes regularly (Gallup, 1954):	55.6	49.5	58.4	54.0	41.3
Attitudes on Child Rearing and Discipline					
Approve of a curfew for children under the age of 16 (Gallup, 1958):	72.7	79.4	80.2	82.0	66.2
Think it would be a good idea to hold parents responsible for property damage their children cause (Gallup, 1958):	94.6	93.3	91.2	85.3	81.1

TABLE 1—(Continued)

	Upper non-manual[a]	Lower non-manual[b]	Upper manual[c]	Lower manual[d]	Farmers[e]
Think that grade school teachers should be allowed to paddle their pupils (Gallup, 1958):	56.3	56.7	59.4	65.7	76.2
Approve of corporal punishment for juvenile offenders in the place of incarceration (Gallup, 1958):	13.8	15.2	13.4	20.5	23.6
Reading, Exposure to Mass Media					
Are reading at least one book or novel (Gallup, 1957):	33.9	27.6	20.0	17.6	17.6
Young non-Southern respondents:	*32.6*	*30.8*	*23.4*	*23.7*	*13.5*
Read a newspaper the preceding day (Gallup, 1957):	80.1	79.3	73.5	63.3	59.5
Have book shelves in the home (Gallup, 1953):	83.5	70.9	58.2	41.8	55.1
Level of Information					
Average percentage of correct responses to 17 factual questions:	59.8	51.6	40.4	32.5	33.1
Attitudes toward Racial and Religious Minorities					
Think that each state should have the right to decide what it will do about integration (whites only, Gallup, 1963):	39.2	44.4	50.0	54.7	63.9
Young non-Southern respondents:	*29.5*	*34.4*	*43.3*	*38.6*	*65.0*
Would object to sending children to a school where a few of the children are colored (whites only, Gallup, 1963):	13.4	8.7	26.4	29.1	44.3
Young non-Southern respondents:	*8.6*	*1.8*	*15.6*	*7.9*	*24.3*
Think that American Negroes have too much power (whites only, Gallup, 1961):	21.3	26.1	27.0	24.4	22.9
Would vote for a Negro if he were well qualified and were party's candidate for President, (whites only, Gallup, 1961):	62.4	54.4	49.2	53.3	60.6

TABLE 1—(Continued)

	Upper non-manual[a]	Lower non-manual[b]	Upper manual[c]	Lower manual[d]	Farmers[e]
Think that the Kennedy administration is pushing racial integration too fast (whites only, Gallup, 1963):	37.4	39.1	38.6	45.8	56.5
Young non-Southern respondents:	*34.8*	*37.0*	*34.5*	*29.7*	*55.0*
Would favor a law giving Negroes the right to be served in public places such as hotels, restaurants, and theaters (whites only, Gallup, 1963):	66.7	63.3	58.7	68.9	45.5
Think that in general American Jews are just as loyal to our country as other citizens (gentiles only, NORC, 1957):	86.7	84.2	81.9	83.7	70.9
Agree with the statement that the trouble with letting Jews into a nice neighborhood is that sooner or later they spoil it for other people (gentiles only, NORC, 1957):	20.6	20.3	17.3	17.2	16.6
Would vote for a Jew if he were well qualified and were party's candidate for President (gentiles only, Gallup, 1961):	73.5	73.5	68.4	71.6	55.2
Think that American Jews have too much power (gentiles only, Gallup, 1961):	16.8	16.4	17.0	17.4	17.9
Would seriously object to a son or daughter marrying a Jew (gentiles only, Gallup, 1958):	47.8	45.3	42.3	41.3	63.9
Young non-Southern respondents:	*48.9*	*44.6*	*44.6*	*36.6*	*69.6*
Have heard criticism of Jews in the past six months (gentiles only, NORC, 1957):	21.1	18.7	14.4	15.3	9.9

TABLE 1—(Continued)

	Upper non-manual[a]	Lower non-manual[b]	Upper manual[c]	Lower manual[d]	Farmers[e]
Would vote for a Catholic if he were well qualified and were party's candidate for President (non-Catholics only, Gallup, 1961):	81.3	76.8	84.1	79.0	76.3
Would seriously object to a son or daughter marrying a Catholic (non-Catholics only, Gallup, 1958):	38.8	38.7	32.2	34.3	37.4
Young non-Southern respondents:	*40.7*	*27.7*	*32.3*	*26.4*	*65.2*
Attitudes on Civil Liberties, Tolerance of Deviance					
Think that newspapers should be allowed to criticize our form of government (NORC, 1954):	69.2	71.3	59.4	46.1	42.9
Think that a person known to favor communism shoud be allowed to make a speech in this town (Gallup, 1953):	37.0	34.3	29.3	24.2	22.7
Think that members of the Communist Party should be allowed to speak on the radio (NORC, 1957):	26.2	19.8	15.3	13.2	13.3
Think that the Socialist Party should be allowed to publish newspapers in this country (NORC, 1957):	57.6	42.5	42.3	36.8	33.1
Would vote for an atheist if he were well qualified and were party's candidate for President (Gallup, 1959):	28.0	23.6	24.9	20.4	11.0
Young non-Southern respondents:	*35.1*	*29.4*	*29.1*	*27.3*	*13.9*
Would not let the fact that a candidate for President was divorced influence their voting (Gallup, 1963):	73.5	79.0	71.8	77.9	61.6

TABLE 1—(Continued)

	Upper non-manual[a]	Lower non-manual[b]	Upper manual[c]	Lower manual[d]	Farmers[e]
Agree with the statement that prison is too good for sex criminals, that they should be publicly whipped or worse (NORC, 1953):	25.1	24.0	40.7	37.8	35.9
Agree with the statement that no decent man can respect a woman who has had sex relations before marriage (NORC, 1953):	27.4	23.5	35.5	33.6	39.0
Authoritarianism (also see previous two questions)					
Agree with the statement that the most important thing to teach children is absolute obedience to their parents (NORC, 1953):	49.6	50.3	74.0	72.0	70.1
Agree with the statement that any good leader should be strict with people under him in order to gain their respect (NORC, 1953):	49.6	46.5	60.2	63.3	51.2
Agree with the statement that there are two kinds of people in the world: the weak and the strong (NORC, 1953):	50.6	46.4	61.2	62.4	55.1
Political Attitudes					
Would prefer liberal party if there were only two major parties in the U.S., one for liberals and one for conservatives (those with preference only, Gallup, 1965):	43.7	41.9	51.6	61.5	60.1
Voted for Goldwater in the 1964 Presidential election (those who voted only, Gallup, 1965):	40.1	28.9	32.3	18.0	48.3
Young non-Southern respondents:	*36.8*	*33.9*	*32.4*	*8.6*	*32.6*
Think that big businessmen in the U.S. have too much power (Gallup, 1961):	40.1	42.2	43.7	41.9	53.8

TABLE 1—(Continued)

	Upper non-manual[a]	Lower non-manual[b]	Upper manual[c]	Lower manual[d]	Farmers[e]
Think that labor union leaders in the U.S. have too much power (Gallup, 1961):	68.7	62.8	48.5	45.6	62.2
Approve of labor unions (Gallup, 1953):	68.1	72.4	79.6	78.0	50.3
Political Interest and Activity					
Are registered to vote in the next election (Gallup, 1963):	82.0	75.2	73.4	67.7	68.7
Always vote in elections (Gallup, 1960):	63.0	59.1	52.0	49.0	51.8
Have a great deal of interest in politics (Gallup, 1960):	34.0	30.2	21.6	19.7	23.2
Worked for a party or candidate in the last (1964) election campaign (Gallup, 1964):	16.1	9.2	3.9	3.7	5.1
Voted in the Presidential election of 1964 (Gallup, 1965):	85.7	81.5	69.7	69.1	84.2
Young non-Southern respondents:	*82.2*	*81.5*	*73.6*	*67.5*	*97.7*
Attitudes on International Relations					
Approve of the United Nations (Gallup, 1955):	80.9	80.9	76.7	76.9	72.4
Young non-Southern respondents:	*91.2*	*81.8*	*78.3*	*82.0*	*79.3*
Think that both "good" and "bad" nations should be members of the United Nations (Gallup, 1954):	54.9	58.4	44.6	45.3	37.6
Think that Communist China should be admitted to the United Nations (Gallup, 1965):	30.8	31.6	17.4	16.9	13.6
Young non-Southern respondents:	*34.0*	*44.4*	*21.4*	*18.4*	*13.6*
Think that it is very important to try to make the United Nations a success (Gallup, 1960):	92.4	88.8	85.8	81.0	69.9

TABLE 1—(Continued)

	Upper non-manual[a]	Lower non-manual[b]	Upper manual[c]	Lower manual[d]	Farmers[e]
Think that the U.S. and Russia should work out an arrangement to buy and sell goods to one another (Gallup, 1955):	64.4	56.6	51.3	56.4	51.8
Young non-Southern respondents:	*65.2*	*61.2*	*56.8*	*57.2*	*45.6*
Think that it is possible to reach a peaceful settlement of differences with Russia (Gallup, 1964):	65.7	61.6	50.3	57.5	51.6
Are in favor of foreign aid, in general (Gallup, 1965):	64.4	63.0	59.5	52.8	47.5
Young non-Southern respondents:	*71.8*	*66.7*	*64.5*	*69.4*	*52.3*
Favor breaking off relations with Russia (NORC, 1957):	13.2	13.1	18.5	22.6	22.5
Gratification Derived from Work					
Enjoy work so much that it is hard to put it aside (Gallup, 1955):	47.4	44.4	48.3	49.4	62.8
Young non-Southern respondents:	*43.9*	*29.3*	*43.0*	*44.3*	*51.7*
Enjoy hours on the job more than hours not on the job (Gallup, 1955):	39.9	38.5	38.5	40.7	63.3
Young non-Southern respondents:	*31.0*	*29.3*	*31.6*	*31.4*	*58.9*
Happiness					
Are very happy (Gallup, 1957):	58.4	59.6	57.2	51.0	48.0
Young non-Southern respondents:	*59.2*	*60.4*	*64.9*	*55.9*	*51.0*
Faith in People					
Think that most people can be trusted (NORC, 1957):	81.3	81.7	75.0	69.5	74.8
Social Class Identification					
Consider themselves middle-class or upper-class (Gallup, 1955):	75.5	63.4	43.9	35.1	48.2

TABLE 1—(Continued)

	Upper non-manual[a]	Lower non-manual[b]	Upper manual[c]	Lower manual[d]	Farmers[e]
Young non-Southern respondents:	*78.9*	*67.7*	*53.9*	*37.8*	*44.8*
Standards of Dress					
Approve of women wearing Bermuda shorts on the streets (Gallup, 1955):	33.9	30.1	38.0	26.1	8.4
Young non-Southern respondents:	*47.8*	*34.3*	*43.9*	*34.9*	*13.8*
Attitudes on Marriage and the Family					
Think that birth control information should be available to everyone who wants it (Gallup, 1963):	81.0	75.3	75.1	75.4	61.6
Median ideal age for a man to marry, according to respondents (Gallup, 1957):	24.8	24.6	24.5	24.1	23.6
Median ideal age for a woman to marry, according to respondents (Gallup, 1957):	22.0	21.8	21.5	21.0	21.2
Median ideal number of children for a family, according to respondents (Gallup, 1963):	2.8	2.7	2.8	3.1	3.3

less trusting of people, and more favorable to early marriage and high fertility than most or all categories of urban workers. Some of the differences are quite large. For instance, the percentage of farmers who say that they are teetotalers exceeds the percentage for the most similar urban category by 30 points, and the percentage of non-Catholic farmers who say that they would object to a son or daughter marrying a Catholic is nearly 20 points greater than the percentage for non-Catholics in the most simila urban category. The leveling of traditional rural-urban differences, if there has been such a trend, has not progressed as far as some observers seem to think.

Our data provide no direct measure of religiosity, but they confirm the impression that farmers are generally more traditional and fundamentalist in their religious beliefs than any other occupational category. For instance, farmers are most likely to believe that there is a life after death, that there is a Devil, and that Jesus Christ will return to earth. The fact that a larger

percentage of the urban Christians are Catholics can account for none of the rural-urban difference in fundamentalism, because in general Catholics are more fundamentalist than Protestants.[7]

Farmers apparently attend religious services more frequently than any other category except upper nonmanual workers,[8] and they exceed all other categories in watching or listening to religious services on television or radio. On the other hand, they are lowest in church membership (or were in 1954), but we doubt that church membership is a good index of religious interest or devoutness.

The data on attitudes on child rearing and discipline are fragmentary, but they indicate that rural people are more likely to favor corporal punishment, are less likely to be willing to accept responsibility for the behavior of their children, and are less likely to favor legal restrictions on the freedom of children. The latter perhaps reflects the greater individualism often attributed to rural people. No clearcut restrictive-permissive difference is indicated.

The evidence on the conservatism of farmers is ambiguous. When the respondents were asked to state their preference for either a hypothetical liberal or conservative party, a larger percentage of farmers than of any urban category except lower manual workers chose the liberal party. And yet, a larger percentage of farmers than of any other category voted for Goldwater in 1964 and evince antilabor attitudes. The evidence on political interest and activity also is contradictory. Farmers rank below all urban categories except lower manual workers on some measures of political interest, but they almost equal upper nonmanual workers in percentage who say that they voted in the 1964 Presidential election. Perhaps the 1964 election elicited unusual interest from farmers, or this apparently incongruous finding could result from sampling error.[9]

The impression that farmers are highly authoritarian is not confirmed. The last two questions in Table 1 under "attitudes on civil liberties and tolerance of deviance" and the three questions under "authoritarianism" form the widely used five-item F-scale. The responses to all these questions indicate that farmers are more authoritarian than nonmanual workers, but the responses to four of the questions indicate that manual workers are more authoritarian than farmers. With the other variables held constant, authori-

[7] See Leonard Broom and Norval D. Glenn, "Religious Differences in Reported Attitudes and Behavior" (unpublished paper, 1966).

[8] We must state this finding tentatively because there is variation in attendance from week to week.

[9] The fact that the difference between farmers and each of the manual categories is statistically significant indicates that the difference probably exists in the universe, but it may well not be as large in the universe.

tarianism is positively associated with age and Southern residence and is negatively associated with education.[10] It is apparent, therefore, that farmers are considerably less authoritarian than their median age, median education, and high concentration in the South would lead one to expect. The independence, individualism, and unwillingness to submit to authority sometimes attributed to farmers might make them less likely to agree with the scale items that deal expressly with authority and power relations. Significantly, a larger percentage of farmers than of persons in any other category agree with the statement that concerns premarital sex relations and does not directly concern authority and power. Also, the senior author and Leonard Broom have shown that Catholics are more authoritarian than Protestants when several relevant variables are controlled.[11] This difference, of course, tends to make urban people more authoritarian than rural people.

The impression that prejudice is prevalent among farmers is confirmed by the responses to most of our revelant questions, but this finding must be viewed cautiously. Unlike the findings of several earlier attitude surveys,[12] the responses to all but one of our questions on the topic indicate that anti-Semitism is more prevalent among farmers than in any other occupational category. And yet, farmers are least likely to report having heard criticism of Jews in the past six months. This anomaly indicates either that urban respondents are more likely to try to conceal prejudice from interviewers or that urban anti-Semitism is more active and more frequently verbalized than its rural counterpart.[13] The dearth of contacts that most farmers have with Jews lends credence to the latter explanation. Rural anti-Semitism is probably typically a latent, culturally determined, religiously based form of intolerance and ethnocentrism that is rarely expressed, acted on, or focused on specific individuals.

Finally, the responses to the question on happiness are not congruent with the stereotype of the happy, carefree, idyllic rural existence. Farmers are less likely than persons in any other category to rate themselves "very happy," and their higher median age cannot account for the difference. There are several possible reasons for this, but we suspect that it results primarily from farmers' low average earnings. We show in another paper that the

[10] This finding comes from an unpublished study by the senior author. For results of a similar study, see J. Allen Williams, Jr., "Regional Differences in Authoritarianism," *Social Forces* (forthcoming).

[11] Broom and Glenn, "Religious Differences in Reported Attitudes and Behavior" (unpublished paper, 1966).

[12] For instance, see Howard H. Harlan, "Some Factors Affecting Attitude Toward Jews," *American Sociological Review*, VII (1942), 816–827.

[13] For a discussion of possible reasons for inconsistency in the findings of surveys dealing with anti-Semitism, see George E. Simpson and J. Milton Yinger, *Racial and Cultural Minorities* (3rd ed.; New York: Harper and Row, 1965), pp. 221–223.

occupations with high average happiness ratings are generally the occupations with high median earnings—the cliché that "money cannot buy happiness" notwithstanding.[14] Also, the fact that the farmer is being relegated to the periphery of American life as the society becomes more metropolis-centered and metropolis-dominated may be adverse to his self image and happiness.

The extent to which farmers are "middle-class."

Even a cursory glance at Table 1 reveals that the responses of farmers more nearly resemble those of manual workers than those of nonmanual workers. In fact, of the seventy-eight response patterns shown (not including those with controls, which are printed in italics), thirty-six reveal the farmers to be the least "middle-class" of the five categories. That is, the responses vary monotonically from the highest to the lowest urban occupational category, thus establishing a clearcut manual-nonmanual difference, and farmers differ more than any urban category from upper nonmanual workers. Only eight of the seventy-eight patterns with a clear manual-nonmanual difference show farmers closer to nonmanual than to manual workers. On most of the other questions, farmers fall between the upper and lower manual categories, or are slightly "above" upper manual workers. Therefore, of the attitudes and behavior investigated here, farmers appear to be "middle-class" only in church attendance, disapproval of a curfew for children, willingness to vote for a Negro Presidential candidate, objection to a son or daughter marrying a Jew, voting for Goldwater in 1964, percentage voting in 1964, and attitudes toward labor unions.

In addition to resembling the working class in most attitudes and behavior, farmers are not much more likely than upper manual workers to consider themselves members of the middle class. In responding to a forced-alternative question on social class membership, the percentage of farmers who say that they are middle or upper-class is only 4.3 points greater than the percentage of upper manual workers and is 15.2 points less than the percentage of lower nonmanual workers. Of those who consider themselves middle-class, more upper manual workers than farmers say that they are upper-middle-class.[15]

In spite of the fact that farmers fail to show a "middle-class" response distribution on most of the questions, their responses to well over half of the questions place them nearer to nonmanual workers than the data in Table 2

[14] "The Cultural Distance Between Occupations" (unpublished paper, 1966). Also see Norman M. Bradburn and David Caplovitz, *Reports on Happiness* (Chicago, Aldine Publishing Co., 1965), pp. 8–13.

[15] The percentages are 13.7 for upper manual workers and 6.5 for farmers.

TABLE 2

Characteristics of Males in Broad Occupational Categories, as Reported by the 1960 Census

Occupational category	Median earnings[a] All males	Median earnings[a] Young non-Southern males[e]	Median years of school completed[b] All males	Median years of school completed[b] Young non-Southern males[f]	Median age[c]	Percentage in the South[d]
Upper nonmanual	$6,640	6,913	13.7	15.1	42.3	26.5
Lower nonmanual	4,862	5,540	12.3	12.6	38.6	25.9
Upper manual	5,240	6,007	10.5	12.0	41.8	27.0
Lower manual	3,835	4,770	9.3	10.6	39.0	29.2
Farmers	2,169	3,170	8.7	12.1	49.2	37.4

[a] Males with earnings in the experienced civilian labor force ,1959.
[b] Males in the experienced civilian labor force, 1960.
[c] Employed males, 1960.
[d] Males in the experienced civilian labor force, 1960.
[e] Aged 25 through 44.
[f] Aged 25 through 44.

would lead one to expect. Farmers rank lowest of the five occupational categories in earnings and education, and their high median age and high concentration in the South should make them even less "middle-class" than their earnings and education predict.[16] Therefore, there does seem to be some influence among farmers toward "middle-classness," even though it apparently is preponderant only in the case of a few attitudes, such as those toward labor unions. Probably some such influence derives directly or indirectly from self-employment, property ownership, other elements of the "class situation" in the Marxian sense, and the consequent perception of economic interests.

Probable sources of the rural-urban differences.

The findings reported so far might strengthen the suspicion that there are no rural-urban differences as such but only differences associated with socioeconomic status, age, region, religion, and economic interests. Although the N's of our samples are too small for simultaneous control of all these variables, our age and regional controls, data on earnings and education of young non-Southern males (see Table 2), and data on religious

[16] The responses of older people to most opinion poll questions resemble those of younger people at lower educational levels. On a smaller, but still large, proportion of questions, the responses of Southerners resemble those of non-Southerners at lower educational levels.

preference are fairly good bases for conclusions on the probable sources of the rural-urban differences.

Among young non-Southern males, farmers have about the same median educational attainments as upper manual workers but rank below all other occupational categories in median income. We show elsewhere that the educational rather than the economic standing of an occupational category is the better predictor of reported attitudes and behavior,[17] and therefore, with age and region controlled, one would expect the responses of farmers to range from close similarity to upper manual workers to similarity to lower manual workers. Marked deviation from this expectation suggests either sampling error or the influence of factors other than earnings, education, age, and region.

Significantly, farmers deviate markedly from the expected responses on eighteen of the twenty-seven questions on which age and regional controls are applied. Young non-Southern farmers enjoy work more, are more puritanical, are more opposed to drinking, read less, are more opposed to desegregation, are more ethnocentric and isolationist, are more opposed to religious out-marriage, and voted in larger numbers in the 1964 Presidential election than their earnings and education predict.[18] Farmers no doubt read less than urban workers partly because their occupation demands longer hours and leaves less time for reading, but the reasons for the other differences are less obvious.

The greater work orientation, opposition to drinking, and modesty in the standards of dress of the farmers may result at least partly from a larger percentage of them being Protestant. Although metropolitan Protestants and Catholics in the United States do not now differ greatly on any of these variables,[19] a possible historical difference in religious influences on these attitudes is not ruled out. In fact, metropolitan Protestants may have given up the traditional puritanical and ascetic attitudes primarily because they have been influenced by their non-Protestant neighbors and associates. It is possible that rural existence is inherently conducive to asceticism and that urban life inevitably has the opposite influence, but it is unlikely that this generalization would stand the test of comparative analysis.

Influence of low population size, density, and heterogeneity seems more

[17] "The Cultural Distance Between Occupations" (unpublished paper, 1966).

[18] Several of the differences between farmers and urban workers are greater among young non-Southern respondents than in the total sample. This probably reflects the fact that the South, while still the least urbanized region, has been urbanizing more rapidly than the other regions and therefore has a larger percentage of people of rural origins in its urban labor force.

[19] Broom and Glenn, "Religious Differences in Reported Attitudes and Behavior" (unpublished paper, 1966).

likely in the case of the apparently stronger endogamous norms and the greater isolationism, ethnocentrism, and expressed prejudice of rural people. As almost any urban sociology textbook points out, relative geographic isolation and lack of contact with people of diverse cultural backgrounds could in themselves be conducive to cultural absolutism and its associated characteristics.

Probably the most plausible explanation for rural-urban attitudinal differences, and the one with the most theoretical support in the literature, is that the greater cultural interstimulation and cross-fertilization of ideas in the cities—results of greater population size, density, and heterogeneity—are more conducive to innovation than the conditions of smaller communities.[20] The innovations generated in the cities may be diffused to the hinterland, but there is a time lag between change in cities and corresponding change in rural areas. The mass media and rapid transportation in advanced industrial societies may lessen the lag but do not eliminate it. This explanation does not assume that cultural change originates only in cities and that all diffusion is unilateral from cities to the countryside.[21] However, it does assume that diffusion is predominantly in one direction, as it apparently is at least in the contemporary United States and in other advanced industrial societies. Credence is lent to this explanation by the fact that almost invariably the urban responses to the questions included in this study seem to differ from the rural responses in the direction of recent change.[22]

Whatever the reasons may be, our data reveal important rural-urban differences among young non-Southern adults that are not simply "social-class" differences. Although farmers usually differ from white-collar workers in the same direction as manual workers, they sometimes differ much more. This suggests that some "social-class" differences in the urban population may result from a larger percentage of the working class having a recent rural background.[23] Whereas undoubtedly differences in earnings and education account for much of the total rural-urban difference in attitudes and

[20] For instance, see Ralph E. Turner, "The Industrial City: Center of Cultural Change," in Caroline F. Ware (ed.), *The Cultural Approach to History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), pp. 228–242.

[21] For a criticism of the view that diffusion is always from the city to the countryside, see Albert J. Reiss, Jr., "An Analysis of Urban Phenomena," in Robert M. Fisher (ed.), *The Metropolis in Modern Life* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1955).

[22] Our judgments as to the direction of recent change are partly *a priori* and are partly based on poll data reported in the *Gallup Political Index*.

[23] For documentation of the fact that a larger percentage of manual than of nonmanual workers are of rural origin, see Leo F. Schnore, "The Rural-Urban Variable: An Urbanite's Perspective," *Rural Sociology*, XXXI (1966), 138–139. Schnore suggests that urban fertility differences by socio-economic level may result largely from the larger percentage of people of rural origins at the lower levels.

behavior, some of the cultural variation by socioeconomic level may in turn reflect traditional rural-urban differences.

Summary and Conclusions

Our data corroborate a number of stereotypes and impressions concerning rural-urban attitudinal differences. The responses of farmers to national opinion polls indicate that they are more traditional in religious beliefs, ascetic, work-oriented, puritanical, prejudiced, ethnocentric, isolationist, uninformed, unlikely to read books or newspapers, distrustful of people, intolerant of deviance, opposed to civil liberties, opposed to birth control, and favorable to early marriage and high fertility than all or most classes of urban workers. However, the evidence on political attitudes and interest is ambiguous, and farmers rank between urban manual and nonmanual workers in authoritarianism. Contrary to popular belief, a smaller percentage of farmers than of any broad urban occupational category consider themselves "very happy."

The responses of farmers generally are more similar to the responses of manual workers than to those of white-collar workers. Farmers apparently are culturally "middle-class" only in a very few kinds of values and behavior.

There are large rural-urban differences that are not plausibly explained by differences in socioeconomic status, age, region of residence, religious composition, or economic interests. Some of these differences may reflect the more pervasive Protestant influence in rural areas, but others probably result more or less directly from differences in the size, density, and heterogeneity of the population.

We do not attempt in this short paper to pursue all the theoretical implications of our data, and we hope that others will relate the data to issues we do not discuss.